

RESOLUTION

Supporting a City of Philadelphia “Lights Out” Campaign and Recognizing and Honoring the Bird Safe Philly Coalition, the Building Industry Association of Philadelphia, and the Building Owners and Managers Association Philadelphia in Their Collaborative Effort to Protect the Migratory Bird Population

WHEREAS, Bird/glass collisions in the U.S. are estimated to cause as many as one billion bird deaths each year. These deaths are one of the factors most responsible for a 29% decline in North American bird populations since 1970. About 70% of North America’s land birds (350-400 species) are migratory. Of these, more than 80% migrate at night; and

WHEREAS, Most native songbirds live in rural or forested habitats that are light-free at night. During migration, intense lights can cause birds to collide with windows or walls, or cause them to circle in confusion, leaving them weak and exhausted when they land; and

WHEREAS, Each year, 100 million or more birds pass through Philadelphia during spring and fall while migrating between their breeding and wintering grounds. Many never complete their epic journey because they are killed when they slam into buildings and fly into windows, confused by the bright lights and glass; and

WHEREAS, the most common species to meet their demise by Philly buildings are Ovenbirds, Common Yellowthroats, White-throated Sparrows, and Gray Catbirds; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to solve this problem, the Bird Safe Philly Coalition, the City of Philadelphia, and the building industry have partnered to establish a “Lights Out” campaign; and

WHEREAS, Thirty-three cities in the United States already have “Lights Out” programs including New York, Boston, Chicago, Atlanta, Baltimore, Wilmington, and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, “Lights Out” is a voluntary program that involves turning off or blocking as many external and internal building lights as possible at night during migration seasons when birds are passing through the city by the thousands; and

WHEREAS, During these spring and fall periods, the City will encourage commercial building owners, operators, and tenants, as well as residential owners and tenants, to voluntarily switch off unnecessary lights, especially in the upper levels, lobby and atrium as well as turn off or dim external lighting, and

WHEREAS, The first season of Lights Out Philly launches April 1, 2021, at the start of peak spring migration and runs through May 31, when most winged migrants will have passed through Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The Bird Safe Philly Coalition is a collaborative effort led by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, National Audubon

Society-Mid-Atlantic Region, and two local Audubon Society chapters (Valley Forge and Wyncote); and

WHEREAS, The building industry has been a collaborative partner and endorser of this initiative through the Building Industry Association Philadelphia and the Building Owners and Managers Association of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Comcast Technology Center and Comcast Center, the two tallest buildings in the City of Philadelphia, and Brandywine Realty Trust, the city's largest landlord, have pledged their support, along with BNY Mellon Center, Jefferson Center, One South Broad, One Liberty Place, Two Liberty Place, and 1515 Market Street; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby support a City of Philadelphia "Lights Out" Campaign and recognize and honor the Bird Safe Philly Coalition, the Building Industry Association of Philadelphia, and the Building Owners and Managers Association Philadelphia in Their Collaborative Effort to Protect the Migratory Bird Population

FURTHER RESOLVED, that an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Bird Safe Philly Coalition, further evidencing the sincere respect of this legislative body.

Councilmembers Katherine Gilmore Richardson (At-Large) and Kenyatta Johnson (2nd District)
March 11, 2021